

dictatorship, the heroic performance of our servicemembers, and the predictions of some in the administration, the transition was far from smooth. Nonetheless, we did not initially see a humanitarian emergency in Iraq.

Four years later, however, this emergency is now unfolding in the cruelest of ways. With Iraq enmeshed in civil war, the relentless violence has displaced numerous civilians not only within Iraq but outside of it as well.

There are a range of possible factors behind the current situation: as the war is increasingly defined by its sectarian nature, the growing potential for neighborhoods to be "cleansed" by one ethnicity or another may accelerate displacement patterns; the overall increase in violence that occurred following the golden dome shrine bombing of February 2006 may have served as a catalyst that changed the face of the war and the tactics of those fighting it.

Regardless of the reasons, the results are clear—millions of Iraqis have been forced from their homes because of entrenched fear and rampant violence. Basic survival needs such as food, clean water, shelter, sanitation, and health care are in short supply. The government infrastructure has collapsed—if it ever truly existed—taking with it the communities it served.

The U.N. High Commission for Refugees estimates that there are nearly 2 million displaced people within Iraq and close to 2.5 million seeking refuge in neighboring countries. In total, that is almost 4.5 million people, Mr. President, 4.5 million individuals or approximately 13 percent of the total Iraqi population. Many of these individuals are from Iraq's shattered middle class and will be critical to rebuilding the country. But who can say where they will be when that time comes and whether they will be willing or able to contribute to that process.

The United States has admitted only a small number of Iraqi refugees since the beginning of the war. According to the State Department, there have been just 687 Iraqi refugees admitted to the United States since the war began in 2003. We have a particular responsibility to provide aid and safe haven for Iraqis whose lives are threatened because they worked for us.

Fortunately, many neighboring countries have been willing to step up to the plate and allow those Iraqis fleeing their homeland to seek temporary shelter despite the fact that many of their needs are straining the already weak and overburdened social services. Indeed, most of Iraq's neighbors are unable to provide adequate assistance to those living within their borders, citizens and refugees alike. The introduction of more than 2 million additional people into these already precarious environments could tip the balance in the wrong direction.

This humanitarian disaster is emblematic of this administration's poor planning when it comes to virtually

every aspect of the war in Iraq. The administration's failure to respond adequately to the needs of these refugees and displaced people will have dramatic consequences for regional and global stability. We still have a chance to reverse course in Iraq, however, to refocus our strategy, and regain our credibility so we can work with the international community and resolve this crisis appropriately.

HONORING OUR ARMED FORCES

SPECIALIST ADAM HEROLD

Mr. HAGEL. Mr. President, I rise to express my sympathy over the loss of U.S. Army SPC Adam Herold of Omaha, NE. Specialist Herold was killed on June 10 when an improvised explosive device detonated near his patrol in Karbala, Iraq. He was 23 years old.

Specialist Herold was the youngest of three brothers in a close-knit Nebraska family. He attended Roncalli High School and would later join the Job Corps in Utah to learn a trade.

In 2005, Specialist Herold made the decision to join the Army. He saw service in the Army as a means to a college education. But he also came from a family with a strong tradition of service to the country. Both of his grandfathers served in World War II.

Specialist Herold had been serving in Iraq since October 2006 with Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 2nd Battalion, 377th Parachute Field Artillery Regiment, 25th Infantry Division, based at Ford Richardson, AK.

We are proud of Specialist Herold's service to our country, as well as the thousands of other brave Americans serving in Iraq.

He is survived by his parents Lance and Debbie Herold, and brothers Andy and Kyle, both of Omaha.

I ask my colleagues to join me and all Americans in honoring SPC Adam Herold.

TRAGEDY IN CHARLESTON, SOUTH CAROLINA

Mr. GRAHAM. Mr. President, on June 18, 2007, in the face of blazing fire, sacrifice and duty overcame fear and surrender. With great sadness and the utmost respect, Senator DEMINT and I mourn the tremendous loss of nine of our finest firefighters, as well as the immeasurable loss experienced by their families and loved ones. As the flames engulfed the building, the brave men and women of the Charleston County Fire Department rushed into the collapsing building as others were running out, fleeing for their lives. May this extraordinary courage and sacrifice forever reflect the spirit of South Carolina, as well as that of our great Nation.

We extend our sincerest condolences to their families, their colleagues, and their friends. You give your loved ones to us to serve and protect our commu-

nities, putting public service above personal comfort. Our gratitude is boundless and our respect infinitely deep. We grieve beside you, and we take pride in and are humbled by this ultimate display of service and valor. In the midst of grief and devastation, may you find comfort in knowing that the memory of your loved ones will be forever etched in the minds of South Carolinians as the true embodiment of an American hero.

The United States has not experienced such a devastating loss of firefighters since the horrific events on September 11, 2001. May the Charleston County Fire Department, led by Chief Rusty Thomas, as well as emergency personnel around the country, forever fill this massive void with the legacy left behind by these brave fallen firefighters. Let their legacy not be engulfed by flames and reduced to rubble but rather let it embolden and encourage others to serve in their honor and continue their mission to public service. There is no higher call than to serve, and to the fallen, their families, and those that will fill their shoes, we are forever indebted to you for your noble sacrifices.

ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

RECOGNITION OF BILL SIMMONS

• Mrs. BOXER. Mr. President, I would like to take a moment to reflect on the work of Bill Simmons, the director of the Yuba County Office of Education's Regional Career Center, and recognize Mr. Simmons' 21 years with the Yuba County Office of Education and commend his more than five decades of service to his country and his community.

In 1954, Bill Simmons began his 24-year career with the U.S. Air Force. He retired in 1977 as a first sergeant for the 9th Field Maintenance Squadron at Beale Air Force Base in Marysville, CA. After his retirement from the U.S. Air Force, Mr. Simmons remained in Marysville and began a long career of service to his community.

Bill Simmons used the leadership skills he gained in the Air Force and began his career with Yuba County as a group counselor in the juvenile probation system. He remained committed to improving the community as he worked to help build the One-Stop Center, an invaluable resource for the region that is the service provider for the Federal Workforce Investment Act's One-Stop Center for Business and Workforce Development.

I had the pleasure of working with Bill when he served on the Yuba County board of supervisors from 1997 to 2005, and we continue to collaborate on issues affecting Beale Air Force Base through Mr. Simmons' role as a member of the Beale Military Liaison Committee. For the last three decades, Bill Simmons has been a forceful advocate